



Townsend Town Council Special Meeting
September 21st, 2022 @ 7:00 pm
VIA CONFERENCE CALL &
Town Hall
141 Main St, Townsend, DE 19734

7:00 pm Town Council Special Meeting

Town Meetings will return to both an in person and a virtual format.

- I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:01 pm by Mayor S. Lobdell
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - a. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell, Councilwoman S. Rojas, Councilman E. Dugan, Town Manager A. Tantillo, Financial Officer J. Helms, Town Clerk M. Rivera, Town Solicitor C. Griffiths, and Police Chief Longo.
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance
 - c. Recognition of Visitors: Logan Ament, Aaron Herska, Debbie Ament, Jim Ament, Andrew Haldeman.
 - d. Announcements: Mayor Lobdell announced there is no official quorum until arrival of CM Mertz and CW Clarke no voting may commence only discussions after presentations. CW Rojas stated the Pickle Ball event was fun. Mayor Lobdell asked if it was a good turnout. CW Rojas confirmed and added that residents want to get together again for another event. CW Rojas noted residents have been talking about getting a league together.
- III. Citizens Comments & Participation:
 - a. Mr. Haldeman wanted to get information on pipe inspections in the neighborhood and shared his involvement with Mr. Ament's project that will be presented. Mayor Lobdell asked TM Tantillo if she has any updates regarding the sewer pipe inspections. TM Tantillo confirmed there are no updates at this time and confirmed that this portion of the project is coming to a close. TM Tantillo stated the update should be presented at one of the next council meetings. TM Tantillo advised to look to the Town website for agenda updates and that work has been mostly completed and the Town is waiting for the results of the finalized reports.
 - b. Chief Longo via zoom wanted to confirm if the video was working as he was unable to see. TM Tantillo and Mayor Lobdell confirmed the Town is having technical difficulties with the camera.
- IV. Adoption of Agenda.
 - a. Mayor Lobdell advised the Town Council was unable to adopt the agenda due to not having enough members for a quorum. CM Mertz and CW Clarke were not present. TS Griffiths confirmed the meeting will have to proceed as a discussion. TS Griffiths advised that another discussion may be needed for items that require voting if Council Members join later. TS Griffiths also advised that the Town may want to move around on agenda items until additional Council Members arrive.
- V. Approval / Rejection of Minutes
 - a. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Council Minutes from the September 7th, 2022, Town Council Meeting.
 1. Moved to next Council Meeting due to lack of quorum.
- VI. **A Presentation by Logan Ament from Boy Scout Troop 204 regarding his Eagle Scout Service Project for Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3792 in Townsend.**

Those wishing to attend virtually may dial **1(301)715-8592**. When directed, provide following meeting ID **827- 6421-7575#** and then the following password **361631#** to enter the meeting. If you choose to access the meeting online click the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82764217575?pwd=aHI4RDhTZ0xiME1HV0ZOcHRxSHZ3QT09>

Residents will be able to view documents posted to the meeting tab on the Town website at www.townsend.delaware.gov or by joining the meeting via computer.

- a. Logan Ament Boy Scout from Troop 204 from Odessa, Delaware and Odessa High School Junior student thanked the Mayor and Council Members for allowing him to present the following:
1. Over the last 20 years thousands of our service men and service women have involved military operations as part of the global war on terrorism. Throughout his life he has seen numerous stories and headlines of operations in the Middle East. Specifically, troops who have demonstrated loyalty and bravery to our Country. It was stories like these that motivated him to construct a memorial for our troops. Because of these reasons he states he is constructing the memorial at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3792 Townsend Delaware.
 2. Mr. Ament noted with various other projects and memorials in the U.S. this has gone through a design process that has taken about a year. First, he explained how he went through a design brief that consisted of various parameters, criteria, and constraints of the project. The criteria consisted of the flat bed, monument, and walkway designs. The constraints consisted of cost, time frame and creating changes at the existing site at the Post. Once completing the design brief, he stated how he researched background of existing war memorials, histories of the last several decades, flower bed designs, walkway designs as well as looking into the site layout of the VFW. He explained how he came up with three concept designs which consisted of a rectangular prism of granite, an oculus, and a statue with a base. The chosen design was an oculus because it was eye catching, simple and most realistic. This became the proposed memorial for the Global War on Terror at the VFW Post.
 3. Mr. Ament described how the memorial consists of a centerpiece that is an eight-foot monument of the oculus with a base under it. The proposed memorial is made of black granite with a base that has a diameter of three feet and text that describes the monument. He then described how the monument is surrounded by a flower bed that is 81 square feet which will consist of a variety of flowers and shrubs to last every season. The flower bed is surrounded by a walkway which will consist of brick pavers and exposed outer concrete. These distinct features make up the memorial plaza 22 feet by 22 feet. He then detailed how the four spotlights will be used to highlight features of the monument. He explained the walkways will connect to existing sidewalks at the VFW.
 4. Mr. Ament gave an account of how the design has gone through several revisions due to cost and design appeal, specifically to the monument and walkway designs. A significant part of the project funding has come from past contributions and customized brick pavers. Since April of 2022 he has been selling these brick pavers. Every brick has three customizable lines for text. These bricks will be installed as part of the walkway for the finished project. Each brick cost \$100.00. He has reached out to various businesses, send letters and attend public events to generate interest. As a result, he has raised \$12,000.00 to date. His goal for the project is \$20,000.00. To meet this goal, he will need to sell close to 100 more bricks. Mr. Ament seeks Townsend's support on getting the word out on this project.
 5. CW Rojas asked if Mr. Ament has presented this project to post members. Mr. Ament confirmed that he has presented the project and it was voted for in September of 2021.
 6. Mayor Lobdell asked if we had anything at Town Hall to advertise this project. TM Tantillo noted the town did have several copies but has run out. TM Tantillo asked if Mr. Ament would be able to give her a copy so she may be able to make more copies at Town Hall. Mr. Logan confirmed he had printed out several and will leave them for Town Hall.
 7. CW Rojas asked if she may take a photo of Mr. Ament and with his presentation set up for the Town newsletter so that information will be on there as well.

8. Mayor Lobdell asked about Mr. Ament's timeline issues he is facing. Mr. Ament stated that has been the biggest constraint with the project. He plans to break grounds for the installation of the walkway this Fall. He is hoping to have a majority of the funding by the end of this year. He explained the project should be ending by the Summer 2023.
9. CW Rojas noted that she is impressed by his project and the presentation. CM Dugan asked if Mr. Ament designed the presentation sketches. Mr. Ament confirmed that he did and his college goal is to pursue a degree in Engineering.
10. CM Dugan asked for his contact information. Mr. Ament wrote it down for him.
11. Mayor Lobdell asked if he has reached out to the local businesses in Townsend. Mr. Ament confirmed that he has sent letter to business in the area over the summer. He noted that he is fairly close to his goal and is confident that he will be able to have the funding available for his project.
12. CW Rojas advised Mr. Ament that the Town is hoping to have a Veterans Day event in October. She stated that if the event comes together as planned than she will send him more information so that he has the opportunity to set up a table as well. Mayor Lobdell noted Mr. Ament had a good amount of interest during the Back-to-School Event and confirmed he is working on assisting him with some things. Mayor Lobdell also advised he would be able to post his flyers at the Post Office. TM Tantillo explained that there is a public board for business and things such as Mr. Ament's project.
13. Mr. Ament gave permission to CM Dugan to post video of Mr. Ament's project.
14. Mayor Lobdell asked of if the monument will be up on the hill. Mr. Ament explained that if one were to face the road from the monument it will be placed to the left of the flags at the VFW Post.
15. Chief Longo wanted to thank him for what he is doing for the Veterans and as a fellow Veteran who served for 18 years. He noted that seeing a young man like Mr. Ament doing this for Veterans is humbling and brings hope that the Country still has a bright future.
16. Mayor Lobdell asked if anyone else has any questions. The Mayor, Council Members and TM Tantillo noted that his presentation was well done. TM Tantillo added that this was great preparation for his future when he presents at future Council Meetings for his development plans.
17. Mr. Haldeman asked if Mr. Ament has any social media pages for people to follow or watch. Mr. Ament confirmed he has all updates for the project, including when he goes to meetings such as this, posted on his Facebook page. He explained that there is a QR code on the top left-hand corner of the flyer. Mr. Ament further explained that all progress and events will be posted.

VII. Committee Reports

- a. **Land Use and Development Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Rojas, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell

- 1. ACTION ITEM: Discussion regarding the Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan.**

- i. Mayor Lobdell confirmed with TM Tantillo the Town needs send letter of approval from the Town to Odessa. TM Tantillo advised the Town will need to address any concerns if applicable. TM Tantillo shared Odessa's Comprehensive Plan and stated that the Planning Commission did not have any concerns during their review at the 9/14/22 Planning Commission Meeting. TM Tantillo explained that Odessa is looking to preserve it as a historical Town. Mayor, Council, and TM Tantillo reviewed Odessa's Comprehensive Plan land use and annexation areas. TM Tantillo noted Odessa identified working together with Middletown and Townsend on transportation concerns. TM Tantillo confirmed Odessa has only two annexation areas. Mayor confirmed this does not affect Townsend and provides a buffer

between Middletown and Townsend. TM Tantillo advised that she would draft a letter stating that both the Town of Townsend Planning Commission and Town Council did not have any concerns with the Town of Odessa Comprehensive Plan, that the Town of Townsend looked forward to working with Odessa in the future and wishing them the best as they went through plan adoption. Mayor Lobdell directed TM Tantillo to move forward with the letter.

VIII. Reports

a. Town Manager

1. **ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote regarding the selection of the ARPA eligible use selection.**

- I. Mayor Lobdell asked if there is a need for an approval vote so that TM Tantillo may obtain quotes for the Public Works Pole Barn Project. TS Griffiths confirmed there is no need for a vote as she is only obtaining quotes and not spending any money. Mayor Lobdell noted that without these first quotes the Town is unable to move forward with the purchase of any items using ARPA funds, as this is a known priority of the Town Council. Mayor Lobdell also advised that ARPA funds may be used to help finalize the Town Police Department and other items around Town such as the park. CW Rojas advised that lights and cameras are needed in the park. Mayor Lobdell and TM Tantillo confirmed that this is being researched since the issue was presented. CW Rojas noted that the areas that need light will be blocked by trees and will not cause light pollution per code. CW Rojas noted that discussion on park hours may need to be changed with light installation.
- II. Mayor Lobdell confirmed that potential police expenses under ARPA will be discussed at the coming meetings TM Tantillo confirmed the total amount of funds available are \$787,623.00. CW Rojas advised she would like a common area such as swings and slides put into Townsend Village II West. CW Rojas noted that this area is not connected to Town by sidewalks and there are no parks. Mayor Lobdell confirmed that DeIDOT is performing a Walkability Study. CW Rojas noted that the railroad may not with DeIDOT to make a sidewalk to pass through. CW Rojas noted that New Castle County does have a 7-to-10-year plan in place to put a park near this area.

IX. Committee Reports

a. **Finance Committee:** Chair: Councilman Dugan, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell

2. **ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote regarding Town Manager spending authority.**

- i. Mayor Lobdell explained that TM Tantillo's spending authority without Council approval is currently only \$1,000.00. Mayor Lobdell advised research has been done Town Manager spending limits in other Delaware municipalities. Mayor Lobdell explained that Clayton's Town Manager spending authority is \$5,000.00 and Elsmere's is \$10,000.00. CW Rojas agreed that it could be raised to at least \$5,000.00. Mayor Lobdell shared numbers from other municipalities as well Mayor Lobdell explained that recently, approval was needed for signage at the Police Department for a little over \$2,000. TM Tantillo explained that there was an emergency authorization to approve her fixing the air conditioner that was under \$2,000.00, by the Finance Committee. CM Dugan explained that recently there was a door repair that could have been quickly fixed as well, if the spending authority was increased. Mayor Lobdell explained that in a little over a year there have been

16 agenda items between \$1,001 and \$5,000.00, seven items that were between \$5,000 and \$10,000.00 that caused additional time needed to approve. Mayor Lobdell noted that with the Towns Finance Manager, there are checks and balances in place.

- ii. CW Rojas asked if TM Tantillo's spending authority only for the administrative department and if Chief Longo has his own spending authority for his department. TM Tantillo explained that she is responsible for the entire budget which means she would have the spending authority. TM Tantillo explained she works together with the Chief to authorize spending for the Police Department. Mayor Lobdell gave the example of how recently there were two purchases that were for the police department that could have been approved quickly depending on the budget, if TM Tantillo had spending authority. Mayor Lobdell explained this does have to be pushed to the next meeting for approval but advised he does not see an issue with approval of raising the budget at least comparatively to Clayton. CW Rojas agreed stating considering the circumstances \$10,000.00 spending authority is more realistic. Mayor Lobdell explained if the spending authority were \$10,000.00, 23 projects could have avoided the Council approval process of being scheduled on an agenda a voted on at a meeting. CW Rojas agreed that it is a long waiting process and noted without a quorum like today approval for a purchase would have been pushed back at least two weeks. TM Tantillo confirmed that items are in the budget or are unusual should be okay to authorize. TS Griffiths advised he has seen Town Managers with spending limits and has also seen Town Managers with spending authority that does not have a limit but is within the budget already given. Mayor Lobdell confirmed that is how Smyrna runs, there is not limit unless it is \$50,000.00 at which point bidding process is required. Mayor Lobdell explained as long as it budgeted it may be approved.

b. Mayor

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

c. State Police

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

d. Town of Townsend Police Chief's Report

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

e. Town Solicitor N. Christopher Griffiths

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

f. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

g. New Castle County Councilman David Carter

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

X. Committee Reports

a. Human Resources Committee: Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan

b. Public Works Committee: Chair: Councilman Dugan, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

c. Veterans Committee: Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Rojas

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

d. **Public Safety Committee:** Chair: Councilman Mertz, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Clarke

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

e. **Community Engagement Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilwoman Rojas

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

f. **Code Review Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

g. **National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee:** Chair: Councilwoman Clarke, Co-Chair: Councilman Dugan

1. ACTION ITEM: No items to be discussed.

XI. Adjournment.

a. *Mayor Lobdell unofficially adjourned the meeting 7:37 pm.*